- 2 -

BIMS *et al.*
Appl. No. 10/661,218

Reply to Office Action of June 14, 2010

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1-8.   (Cancelled)

9.   (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:

periodically transmitting, at a switch, a first heartbeat message to a network having one or more repeaters, the heartbeat message including a virtual local area network (VLAN) identifier (ID) identifying the switch;

listening, at a previously unknown repeater on the network, to messages transmitted over the network for the first heartbeat message identifying the switch when the previously unknown repeater is activated;

sending, by the previously unknown repeater, a second heartbeat message using the VLAN ID identifying the switch after finding the first heartbeat message; and

receiving, at the previously unknown repeater, VLAN configuration information from the switch in response to the switch receiving second heartbeat message.

10.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9, further comprising:

downloading operating software to the previously unknown repeater to set up an operating environment;

entering, by the previously unknown repeater, into an operating state after setting up the operating environment; and

reporting, by the previously unknown repeater, the operating state to the switch.

11-40.   (Cancelled)

41.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 9, wherein the one or more repeaters are communicatively coupled to the switch.

42.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 9, further comprising:

storing the VLAN ID identifying the switch in a local memory after finding the first heartbeat message identifying the switch.

43.   (Cancelled)

44.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 9, wherein the step of listening, at the previously unknown repeater, comprises:

listening, at the previously unknown repeater, to all messages transmitted over the network regardless of VLAN types; and

looking for the first heartbeat message identifying the switch when the previously unknown repeater is activated.

45.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 9, further comprising:

activating the previously unknown repeater by performing at least one of a group consisting of:

powering up the previously unknown repeater, and

plugging the previously unknown repeater into a port of the switch.

46.   (Previously Presented)   The method of claim 9, wherein the VLAN

configuration information includes a VLAN ID identifying traffic criteria.